

Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 34
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Publication: Public
Attachments: See attachment
Submitter Comments:

Submission to the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee Inquiry into the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

My husband and I have been residents in Samford Valley for 30 years. For this time we have also been volunteer members of the Samford Rural Fire Brigade. We made a conscious decision to join the Rural Fire Brigade as a way to serve the community where we had chosen to make our home.

I have been Secretary of Samford Rural Fire Brigade for 29 years and also a firefighter for the last 15 years. During Alan's time as a firefighter he has held various officers positions including 12 years as First Officer. Volunteering for the Samford Brigade is something we love to do.

The proposed Bill directly impacts Rural Fire Brigade volunteers. QFES has no understanding of what motivates volunteers and why they continue to keep showing up.

- "MANAGE" is a concerning word in the Bill. This implies we are an unruly bunch who need to be kept in line. We need to be "supported" in our efforts not micro-managed.
- "PROFESSIONAL" is only used when referencing the urban side of the fire service. Rural Fire Brigade members undertake training like our urban counterparts. We all abide by the same Code of Conduct and follow the same rules. Rural Fire Brigade members are also "professional" in carrying out our role within the Fire Service. The only difference is we are NOT PAID.
- The lack of consultation with Rural Fire Brigades and their members prior to this Bill being presented to Parliament demonstrates we are not valued by the Fire Service. Many other services and organisations were afforded the courtesy of input but not those who it directly impacts the most – The Rural Volunteers. Just 7 days to write a submission shows our input is inconsequential.

I do not support the Bill which has been presented to Parliament. I believe further consultation with Rural Volunteers is warranted.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission.

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Anne Wells

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15 March 2024